POTTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Annual Report 2022

Mission Statement - *To protect the health, safety and welfare of our residents, provide leadership in management of growth and change in the County and balance the desire to preserve the uniqueness and value of Potter County with the need to develop the economy, ecology, and community.*

2021 Potter County Subdivision Activity

50 Subdivision Plans Submitted

28 Minor Subdivisions
16 Major Subdivisions
6 Land Developments

Total Fees Collected: **$6,245**

2021 MEMBERS

Rance Baxter, Chairman
(Term Expires January 1, 2023)

Curt Weinhold, 1st Vice Chairman
(Term Expires January 1, 2023)

Katie Sasala, Secretary, Treasurer
(Term Expires January 1, 2022)

Michael Thierfelder
(Term Expires January 1, 2022)

Charles R. Wicker
(Term Expires January 1, 2024)

Helen Turner
(Term Expires January 1, 2024)

Joe Ayers
(Term Expires January 1, 2022)

POTTER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Potter County Planning Commission was created on May 29, 1961 and the first Potter County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) was adopted January 12, 1971. During this forty-three year period the SALDO has been modified numerous times to reflect changes with development within the County. The current SALDO was adopted in 2017 and the Planning Department is beginning the process of updating the ordinance in 2022.

The Planning Commission consists of seven members, which are appointed by the County Commissioners. Commission members serve four year terms and are appointed based on their willingness and commitment to participate effectively in fulfilling the responsibilities of the Planning Commission.

2021 Board Member Attendance Record

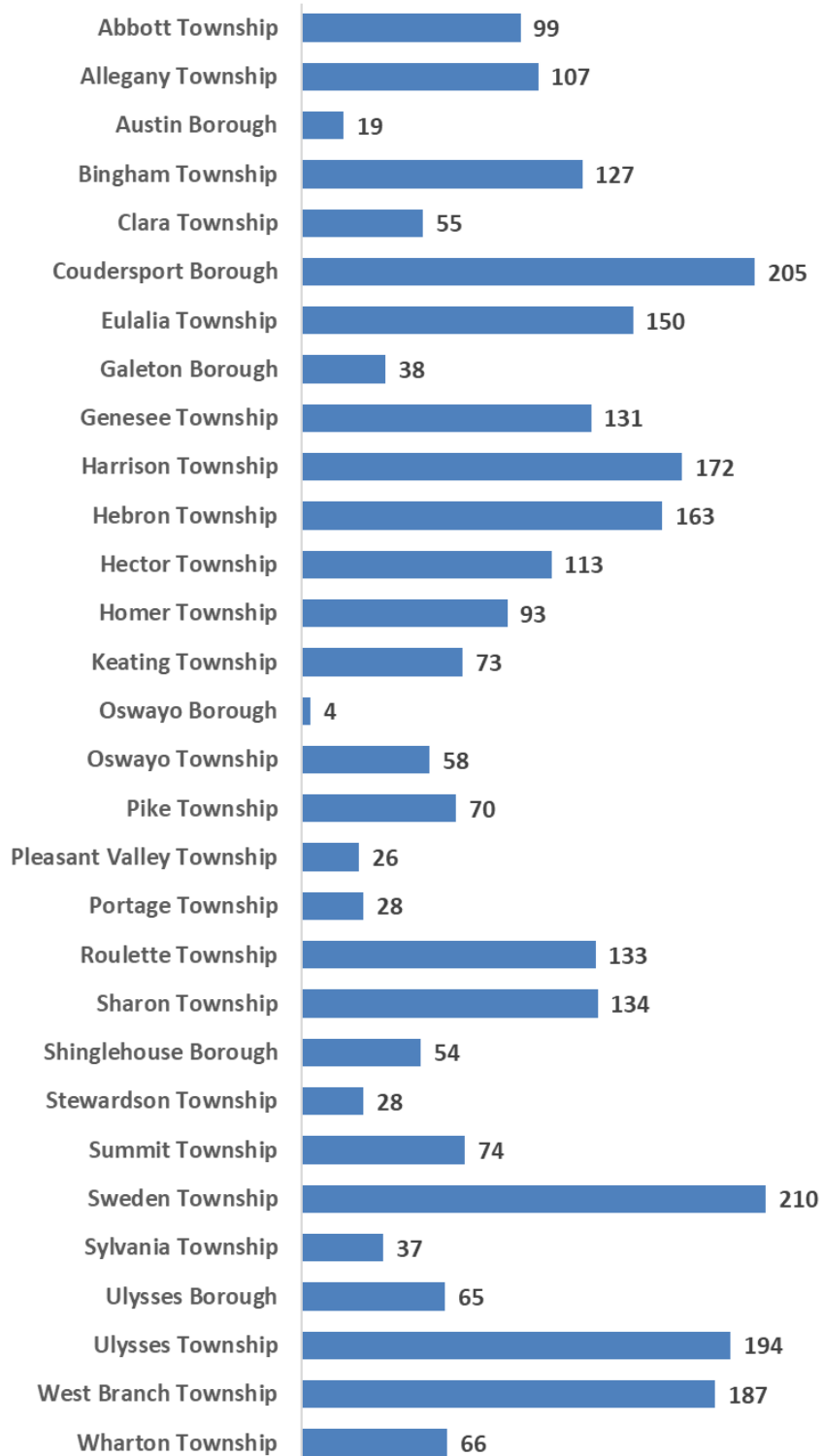| Members	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rance Baxter	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	P	P
Curt Weinhold	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	P	P
Helen Turner	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	P	P
Charles Wicker	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	P	P
Michael Thierfelder	P	E	P	P	E	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	E	P
Katie Sasala	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	No Mtg	No Mtg	E	P	P
Joe Ayers	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	No Mtg	No Mtg	P	E	P

P = Present | E = Excused | A = Absent without notice

2021 Potter County Subdivision Activity by Township

	L/D	Fees	Major	Fees	Minor	Fees		Total Fees
Abbott Township					4	$ 360.00	4	$ 360.00
Allegany Township			2	$ 325.00	2	$ 180.00	4	$ 505.00
Clara Twp					1	$ 90.00	1	$ 90.00
Coudersport Boro	1	$ 150.00	1	$ 170.00			2	$ 320.00
Genesee Twp					1	$ 90.00	1	$ 90.00
Harrison Twp					4	$ 360.00	4	$ 360.00
Hebron Twp	1	$ 150.00	2	$ 310.00	1	$ 90.00	4	$ 550.00
Hector Twp			3	$ 600.00			3	$ 600.00
Keating Twp			1	$ 215.00			1	$ 215.00
Oswayo Twp	1	$ 150.00					1	$ 150.00
Pike Twp			1	$ 155.00	1	$ 100.00	2	$ 255.00
Pleasant Valley Twp					1	$ 90.00	1	$ 90.00
Roulette Twp			1	$ 155.00	2	$ 180.00	3	$ 335.00
Sharon Twp			2	$ 310.00	3	$ 270.00	5	$ 580.00
Stewardson Twp			1	$ 155.00			1	$ 155.00
Sweden Twp	1	$ 150.00	1	$ 200.00			2	$ 350.00
Ulysses Twp			1	$ 155.00			1	$ 155.00
West Branch Twp					8	$ 785.00	8	$ 785.00
Eulalia Township	1	$ 150.00					1	$ 150.00
Summit Township	1	$ 150.00					1	$ 150.00
	6	$ 900.00	16	$ 2,750.00	28	$ 2,595.00	50	$ 6,245.00

Historical Potter County Subdivision Activity

Count of Subdivision by Township

Township	Count
Abbott Township	99
Allegany Township	107
Austin Borough	19
Bingham Township	127
Clara Township	55
Coudersport Borough	205
Eulalia Township	150
Galeton Borough	38
Genesee Township	131
Harrison Township	172
Hebron Township	163
Hector Township	113
Homer Township	93
Keating Township	73
Oswayo Borough	4
Oswayo Township	58
Pike Township	70
Pleasant Valley Township	26
Portage Township	28
Roulette Township	133
Sharon Township	134
Shinglehouse Borough	54
Stewardson Township	28
Summit Township	74
Sweden Township	210
Sylvania Township	37
Ulysses Borough	65
Ulysses Township	194
West Branch Township	187
Wharton Township	66

An ongoing project for the Planning Commission has been modernizing our tracking of Potter County Planning Commission (PCPC) files. The first step of this process was to create an Excel Database with information for every PCPC file in our office.

This has allowed us build a tool which can quickly search PCPC files based on basic information such as, municipality, surveyor, and year. It also allows us to see a complete historical snapshot of subdivision and land development activity in Potter County dating back to 1973.

Potter County Planning/GIS Department Activity

2022 PRIORITIES

1. **County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) Revision -** Work with our consultant and Planning Commission to review and update the 2017 SALDO.

2. **Planning department subdivision and land development document scanning -** Coordinate a scanning and cataloging project to create a digital database of all planning records.

3. **God's Country Village and Farmer's Market -** Work along side Community Development Department to ensure DCNR has what they need from us to continue securing grant funding.

4. **Complete NextGen911 GIS migration -** Work with County 911 staff, consultants, and PEMA to ensure the migration is successful and meets the best practices for public safety standards.

Boards and Committees we Serve on or Lead

- Regional Transportation Board RPO - Vice Chair

- PA Wilds Planning Team - Treasurer/Secretary & Co-Chair of Planning Team

- Potter County Water Quality Working Group

- PA Route 6 Alliance

- ATV Taskforce

- CEDS Committee

- PA GIS Professionals

- PA Planning Directors Group

- Head Waters RC&D

- Leadership Potter County Steering Committee

- Triple Divide Watershed Coalition

- Pine Creek Watershed Council

Planning/GIS and Community Development Interdepartmental Annual Report

COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP) - Community Development Led Project

Potter County was awarded $187,200.00 to distribute to eligible businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Per program guidelines set by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED,) the business had to serve in the hospitality industry and had to prove they met defined criteria. Most importantly prove they suffered a financial loss related to COVID-19.

The Planning/GIS department updated our Revitalize Potter County website to include a CHIRP application dashboard where applicants were able to apply and upload the required documentation online. The department also aided in providing recipients the ability to e-sign their award contract with the county to keep face-to-face contact minimal.

The funds had to be allocated in $5,000 increments. Out of nine applicants, eight were eligible for funding. Based on a formula determined by greatest financial loss suffered, awards were funded in amounts ranging from $10,000 - $35,000, for a total of $185,000. As we were unable to distribute the remaining $2,200 (per the $5,000 increment award stipulation) we provided North Central Regional Planning Commission with the $2,200 for providing their services as our Certified Economic Development Organization (CEDO) that was also required per the program guidelines.

DCED also required that we provide applicant transparency by publicly listing our applicants. Once grant awards were finalized, Planning/GIS Department created a CHIRP recipient map showing what businesses applied for funding, whether they received funding, the location of the business, and for how much.
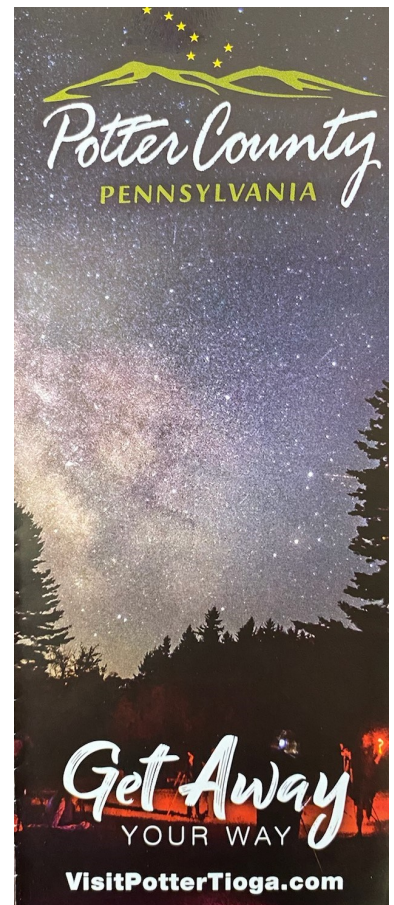
GIS Department Projects

Along with GIS supporting our tourism efforts, the GIS staff have been working hard to meet the requirements for the state migration to NextGen 911. Charlie has focused her efforts on quality control and data improvements of our public safety GIS data.

Charlie also continues to provide support of all municipal water systems by organizing the Triple Divide water shed coalition and its water monitoring efforts.

Visit Potter Tioga Tourism Maps

In partnership with Visit Potter-Tioga, Community Development and Planning/GIS worked to create an updated version of the very popular Potter County specific maps that had been out of stock for more than a year.

Colleen Hanson, Executive Director for Visit Potter-Tioga (VPT) worked diligently with Charlie Tuttle, GIS Technician to design a layout, and create a beautiful tri-fold map that showcases all the Potter County municipalities and great places to "Get Away." Since both VPT and Potter County see such high demand for these maps, VPT was able to get a fantastic price from their printer, and VPT and Potter County split the cost, supplying both with maps for what will (hopefully) be a four-year supply.

Planning/GIS and Community Development Interdepartmental Annual Report

ATV Taskforce

With the growth of ATV riders, coupled with the DCNR pilot program, Will saw the need to bring local stakeholders together in one room. Meeting on a monthly basis throughout the ATV riding season, the taskforce has been extremely successful, and was integral in making the inaugural pilot program run smoothly.

Discussions have included routes, permitting, public safety, mapping, emergency services management, economic impact, and many other topics. Members of the taskforce include DCNR, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania State Police, local police, municipalities, local business owners, Potter County's ATV/UTV Club, Emergency Services personnel, Department of Emergency Services, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and local tourism professionals.

With the growth of the ATV pilot program in it's second year, the ATV taskforce will be even more instrumental in ensuring a safe riding season for all involved.

Broadband survey

If this pandemic has taught us anything at all, it's that having reliable internet connection is a necessity living in a rural area. Potter and Tioga county worked together to assess current broadband service for our area, most importantly identifying unserved or underserved areas.

After identifying these gaps the counties wanted to know how residents, students and businesses connect to information and communicate with others. It was determined that the best way to gather this data was to ask residents to take a few moments of their time and fill out a short survey. This survey received a great response, Oswayo Valley Schools even made it a mandatory homework assignment. This positive response from the community extremely helpful for gathering our data.

Data from the survey will be used to assist both counties in moving forward with their efforts to expand broadband access.

Broadband Grant

Potter County Planning & 911 Department partnered to write a 2.5 million dollar broadband grant application to construct broadband towers in Potter County. These towers would be placed strategically to provide mobile broadband opportunities and help close the public safety communication gaps across the county.

Tourism and Recreation Workgroup

Co-chaired by the Planning/GIS Director and Community Development Director, the Tourism and Recreation Workgroup meets monthly to discuss local events and trends related to Potter County tourism and recreation. The workgroup is made up of local government officials, tourism professionals, a real-estate professionals, State Park and Bureau of Forestry employees, local business owners, historic site administrators, a Senatorial representative, and a member of the Potter County Conservation District. In 2021, the workgroup added having a guest speaker focused around arts, recreation, or tourism to each meeting agenda.

One meeting focused on the real-estate trends seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, while another meeting saw a focus on revitalizing the art and music scene throughout Potter County. An ongoing hot topic for 2021 has been updates on the Duke Warthog Low Fly MOA provided by DCNR's Director, Office of Planning and Policy, Nicole Faraguna.

Planning/GIS and Community Development Interdepartmental Annual Report

Peter DiBiase joins the team

As you may have noticed, we have a new member on our team! Peter (Pete) DiBiase joined the Planning/GIS department in December and has already proven to be a huge asset to the department. You may recognize Pete from being your friendly mailman with the good hair, but no, you can't have him back—here's here to stay! He comes with a vast range of knowledge and skills, having been the Data Manager for Ohio Votes prior to moving to Coudersport. He's self-taught in GIS and an Excel wizard, and is already making processes more efficient!

In the short amount of time Pete has been here he's updated the Planning Departments records databases to be digitally searchable, ensuring departments and visitors no longer have to sift through files and outdated binders to find what they need! This updated database can also be integrated into our GIS Parcel data; increasing the accuracy and value or our land records. Along with the database he has developed a more efficient way to administrate and process subdivision and land development applications coming into the office. This will ensure a much higher accuracy of file management and organized administrative review process.

Potter County Dark Skies Protection Website

In an effort to promote dark skies protection, Will created a website showcasing many ways we can do our part to protect the darkest skies in Pennsylvania.

Cherry Springs State Park is internationally recognized as a dark skies park and is one of our largest tourist draw, (as well as it being just plain beautiful!). Many county residents are pushing to enact ordinances to protect the dark skies. While we do not have the power to enact an ordinance, this website is part of our effort to provide resources and education to area residents and business owners.

The website features many articles and videos highlighting ways to reduce light pollution and alternative solutions during night-time hours. To take a look at the informative website, visit www.pottercountypa.net, click on the "Planning Commission" tab, and scroll down to "Current Project and Resources" where you will see "Potter County Dark Skies Protection resource" listed.

God's Country Village and Farmer's Market

In April of 2021, we applied for a Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) Grant through DCNR for the God's Country Village and Farmer's Market. The program is a matching grant, and we intend to provide most of our match by utilizing in-kind dollars. The grant was extremely detailed, and required a lot of time and effort to complete. After a long, long, wait—we learned in late December that we were awarded $41,400 through the C2P2 grant program!

Our county maintenance director, Joe Kurtz, has graciously agreed to provide his staff time to complete all of the labor needed to complete the site work. This will save thousands of tax-payer dollars by not having to contract out this work. The Potter County Conservation District has also agreed to donate services and staff time to enhance the site. We were also able to partner with Coudersport Borough and Eulalia Township, who will be donating operators and equipment to aid in the site work when we are ready to move dirt.

We are very grateful for the opportunity to enhance the lot to provide entertainment, education, and additional support to our downtown business district. We look forward to being able to start site improvements.